

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 162 956

SO 011 363

AUTHOR Heitzman, Wm. Ray
 TITLE Writing for Publication.
 PUB DATE Nov 78
 NOTE 15p.; Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies (Houston, Texas, November 22-25, 1978)
 EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.83 HC-\$1.67 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS *Communicative Competence (Languages); Composition Skills (Literary); Copyrights; *Guidelines; Higher Education; Information Dissemination; *Professional Recognition; *Publishing Industry; Status Need; *Writing; Writing Skills

ABSTRACT

The paper offers guidelines to prospective authors on how to write for publication in journals or monographs. People generally seem to write because of a desire to share an idea, for financial reasons, for ego gratification, for professional advancement, or for a combination of these reasons. Steps in preparing a manuscript include storing notes about good ideas in an easily retrievable place, overcoming initial inertia by outlining key concepts, locating potential outlets and editors, researching the topic, writing an entire draft copy without concern for spelling and wording, obtaining feedback from colleagues, preparing a neat final revision, and submitting the paper to alternate publishers if the first attempt fails. The question of when to write should be resolved according to personal preferences. Many authors find it easiest to sequester themselves during this period. When editors ask for revisions the author should not be disheartened. Many such requests stem from the editor's financial restrictions or similar content in forthcoming publications. Authors should be aware of citation and permission standards for excerpts from the works of others. Writing book reviews for journals can provide a smooth entrance into the publishing field. The paper concludes with a list of 11 resources about professional writing. (AV)

 * Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
 * from the original document. *

ED162956

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

USE
"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Ray Heitzmann

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND
USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

Writing for Publication

Wm. Ray Heitzmann, Ph.D.

Writing is hard, timeconsuming, frustrating, threatening, lonely.

Writing is rewarding, stimulating, creative, ego-gratifying.

Practicing the skill (and art) of writing results in all of the above feelings, however, the better one gets, the truer the above second sentence becomes.¹ The following essay offers some guidelines to the prospective author in search of an editor or publisher.

STEPS IN PREPARING A MANUSCRIPT

A) Ideas come to us at various times--a good way of retaining them is to locate on the side of your desk a large envelope into which ideas quickly can be written upon a scrap of paper, stored and later retrieved. Often this permits the idea there to mature in the author's mind. Reading maximizes the probability of obtaining ideas.

B) Once you have an idea that you wish to pursue (as in a thesis or dissertation it should be one you can live with through adversity) get it down on paper. As with other tasks,

50-611363

most difficulty lies in overcoming the initial inertia--an outline of key concepts, ideas and topic sentences will suffice at this point.

C) Locate potential outlets and query the editor(s) as to his/her interest in the manuscript. Most are unwilling to commit themselves to unseen manuscripts; some will indicate they will not be dealing with certain topics. For thematic journals, obtain a list of future topics. Additionally, obtain an author's guidelines or manuscript style sheet; this contains instructions for items such as footnotes, format, margins, typing style and similar information.²

D) Research your topic; utilization of the traditional techniques (Educational Index) has been significantly enhanced by several recent innovations such as computer searches. Resources in Education exists as a particularly helpful tool. If you have sufficient lead time using a box to store articles, reviews, newspaper clippings, notes, reports as you come upon them will provide a nice springboard resource. Journals vary from the "hard data" experimental orientation to the "arm chair" type; regardless of preference, documentation of one's ideas and position necessitates familiarity with the research literature.

E) Write an entire first copy; don't let spelling difficulties or wording slow you at this point. If the task seems ominous, use subheadings; it will aid your readers also.

Revise your first draft, correcting spelling and grammatical problems; eliminating jargonese and excess verbiage, upgrading word choice and reorganizing sequence where necessary. This may take several drafts.

F) An old maxim among college students preparing papers, "Put your manuscript away for a week", can be modified to include feedback from others. In lieu of hiding it in a draw, share the manuscript with a few colleagues who can provide confidential, valuable, supportive feedback. Marking it "working copy" can provide "save face" should it contain serious omissions.

G) The final revision should normally consist of a few minor changes and clean, slick typing job according to the journal's guidelines; a short cover letter explaining the importance of the article and your expertise can accompany the letter. Many editors prefer a stamped, self-addressed envelope for rejections; one editor suggests mailing the manuscript to arrive Tuesday, a light mail day, so as to increase the attention it will receive. Most editors will acknowledge receipt of the manuscript usually with a form letter or postcard.

H) Rejections (see below) should be dealt with directly. Some editors will provide suggestions for modification or another journal you might wish to consider. Prudence dictates action at this point--immediately shoot the piece to another publication.

I) Acceptance of the manuscript will provide the fuel to begin the process again, contributing to your growth personally and hopefully to the improvement of the profession.

WHY WRITE?

People generally seem to write because of a burning desire to share an idea, for financial reasons, for ego gratification, for professional advancement or for a combination of these (or in some quarters for survival).

As members of what has been identified as the lonely profession, educators can utilize the print media to share techniques or ideas they have found successful with their colleagues and thereby promote the process of education. Teachers will find writing will aid their classroom organizational ability, language usage and sequencing of instruction.

Relatively few will profit substantially monetarily from their writing. Most journals do not offer a honorarium. However, while some do provide a small subsidy, a few even charge! Textbooks and supplemental instructional materials do offer the opportunity to supplement one's income--a small number of writers may even significantly profit.

"The thrill of seeing one's name in print" provides motivation enough for many authors. The need to achieve should not be underestimated when one considers the sacrifice and revisions needed to succeed. Writing offers the potential for self-actualization--what more could be asked.

WHEN TO WRITE

Personal preference dictates the timing of one's writing. Many educators use evenings, weekends and vacations. Some find the early morning hours profitable while others prefer napping after school and then working late into the night. Setting up a large table organized with materials and research permits utilization of short periods of time without waiting for those large blocks of time that never arrive.

Don't lose your ideas; outlining one's thoughts on an index card contributes to quickly continuing your writing after a lapse. Some authors stop for breaks in the middle of a sentence; others write notes to themselves to facilitate picking up where they left off.

In most cases, the author will find himself/herself as their competition (in the case of a contract or solicited article this is clearly the case) so it behoves you to do everything necessary to facilitate the writing process. This may include sequestering yourself or providing an intermediate reward upon completion of the manuscript--the publication serving as the final reward. One author has identified "creative loneliness" as one of the key components of successful writing. Initially this may sound like jargonese or oratory but thoughtful reflection should provide an appreciation of the importance of this concept not only to writers but artists, athletes, musicians and others.³

Cognitive as well as affective behaviors contribute to writing success. The development of the appropriate attitude necessitates thinking about writing. Subscribing to The Writer, Writer's Digest, watching the PBS show "Book Beat", listening to radio interviews with authors and similar activities provide authors with ideas about writing and stimulation.

REVISIONS, AGENTS, COPYRIGHT AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

"Your manuscript will be reconsidered after shortening it considerably . . . "

Probably the most disheartening of all the revisions requested of an author is that of reducing the manuscript's length. This can be avoided by familiarizing oneself with the journal and its guidelines. However, editorial decisions usually because of finances may result in a request to cut. Following the initial shock many times a simple cutting and pasting, a few sentence changes and a retyping will satisfy the request. A request for expansion of part of an article length manuscript can be met with some research and rewriting; major additions necessitate a significant task.

Many editors go begging for manuscripts--a rejection should promptly be shipped to another editor. The denial may result from causes having little to do with the quality of your submission. Forthcoming publications, financial considerations and editor's mood may influence decisions. If the manuscript

has value, it will find an editor. Most successful authors have experienced the rejection slip and have gone on to fruitful careers.⁴

Some may wish to consider a "subsidy press" for book length manuscripts. While some may frown upon "vanity" presses, they perform a valuable service for specialty works--family histories, biographies and technical works of limited special interest.

Visions of large advances negotiated by skillful literary agents occupy the minds of fledgling authors. Such fantasies rarely occur for professional-technical works, and for popular works and only after the author has paid his/her dues and couples a track record with a hot idea. Normally agents will not consider a novice and will often request a fee to read the "magnum opus."

Protection of one's literary ideas perhaps can best be served through mailing oneself a registered letter containing a copy of manuscript. Retaining this unopened copy can serve to verify ownership in case of dispute. In a case of a speech which will later be submitted for publication, copyright is suggested; (cost ten dollars) the Library of Congress will supply forms.

In using excerpts from the works of others, citation and permission for items over fifty words exists as standard procedure. Works may be copyrighted for the life of the author

plus fifty years; thereafter they enter the public domain.

The book review exists as an excellent starting point for the beginning author. The book provides the frame of reference and the brevity of writing necessary constitutes a nice introduction to the field. A letter to a journal editor (some have book review editors) identifying yourself as wishing to screen books and other instructional materials and identifying your particular area(s) should launch your career. Additionally, examining issues of Forthcoming Books, found in a major library reference room, offers the opportunity of identifying works you wish to review prior to their release. In writing to the publisher list both your competence and where you plan to submit the review. Upon publication, courtesy dictates forwarding two copies to the publisher.⁵

Some useful resources exist to aid the author. In addition to listing several outlets they offer writing tips; a list of suggested references follows.

A mix of perspiration, inspiration and good fortune may catapult your career and consequent appearance on a "talk show."

NOTES

1. An interesting differentiation between author and writer is made by Mickey Spliiane; an author does not receive income for his writing, a writer does .

2. Robert Langley in "Make Your Query Letter Work" offers sound advice for putting together a successful note to assess an editor's interest in your work. Roger Langley, "Make Your Query Letter Work For You," The Writer Vol. 88, August 1974. In Publish Don't Perish J. Wilson McKenny makes an excellent case for following the author's guidelines. J. Wilson McKenny. In Publish Don't Perish Phi Delta Kappa, 1973 (Fastback 23)

3. Bill Rainey, "Guidelines: Writing for Journals," The Clearing House, September 1973, p. 43.

4. The list of eminently successful authors who survived rejections is legion. Naura Hayden reports that her first book survived eight rejections before the ninth took it. She remarks that one well known editor in-chief in New York got fired when seven of her rejections became best sellers. Naura Hayden, Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Energy New York: Pocket Books, 1977.

5. William Van Til, "Writing for Educational Publication", Phi Delta Kappan, June, 1973, p. 700-1.

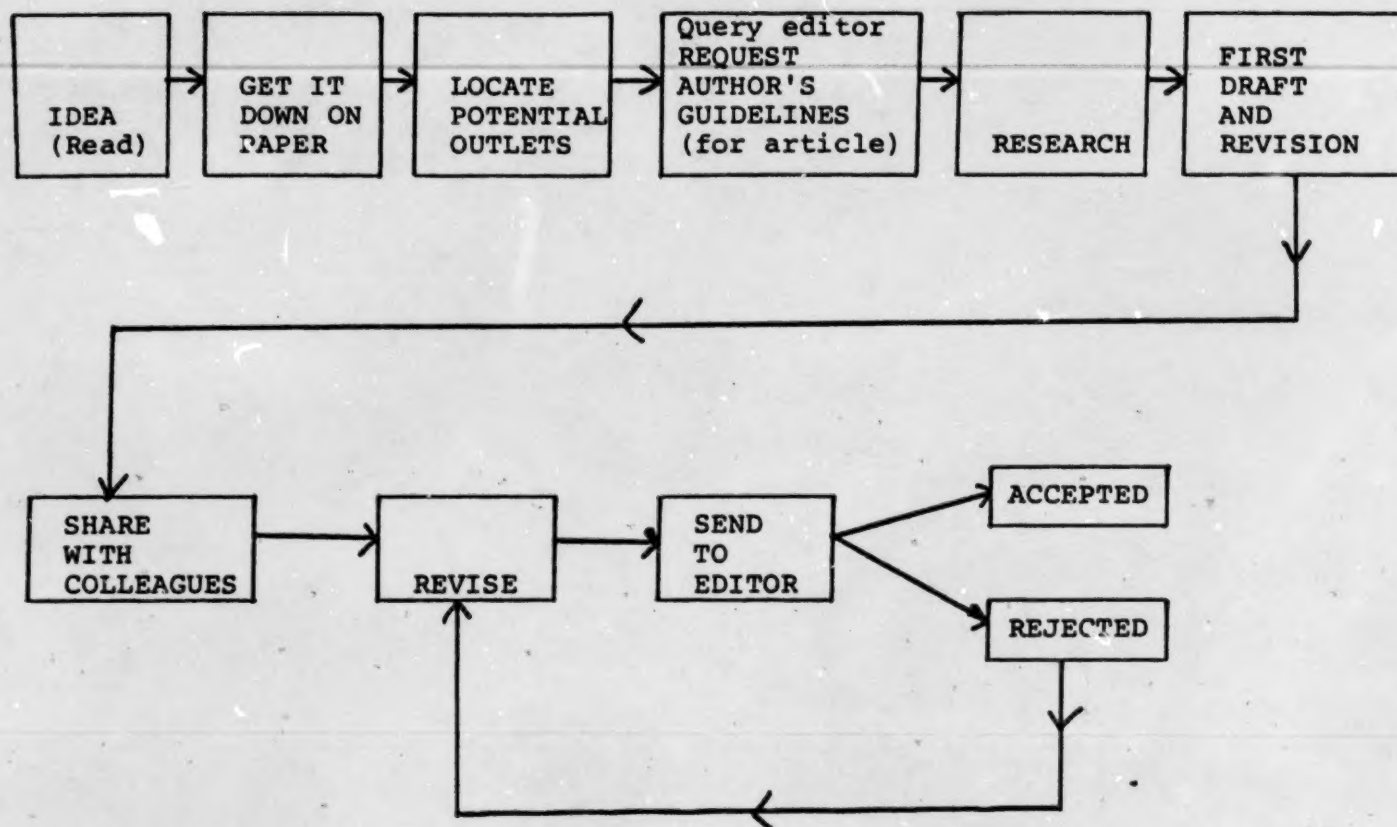
RECOMMENDED READINGS

- Fisher, M. B. and M. R. Smith, Writing As A Professional Activity (Washington, D. C.: National Association For Women Deans Administrators And Counselors, 1976). Containing such practical suggestions as "Finding the time in your life" and "Verbs make the writing" the book serves as an excellent handbook for the novice or experienced writer.
- Gunther, M. Writing And Selling A Non Fiction Book (Boston: The Writer, 1973). Particularly useful because of the step by step advice for those interested in book publication. This publisher offers a complete list of valuable titles.
- Jacobson, R. L. "To get Published, a little Ingenuity May Help." The Chronicle of Higher Education. September 27, 1976. Short piece offering advice to college instructors, i.e. how to "dedissertationize".
- Koester, J. and B. J. Hillman (ed) Writer's Market. (Cincinnati: A Writer's Digest Book) (Annual). In addition to an annotated listing of outlets, practical advice on topics such as copyright is provided.
- Literary Marketplace. (New York: R. R. Bowker) (Annual) A gold mine of information from "book jackets" to "literary awards" and "authors agents".
- Markle, A. and R. C. Rinn (Eds.) Author's Guide to Journals in Psychology, Psychiatry and Social Work. (New York: Haworth, 1977). A useful listing for those in the above disciplines.
- McKenny, J. W. Publish Don't Perish (Bloomington: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1973). Offers several suggestions author-editor relationships, the University Press, writing style.
- Rodman, Hyman. "Some Practical Advice for Journal Contributors." Scholarly Publishing: A Journal for Authors and Publishers, April 1978. While helpful to all authors, most beneficial to college people.
- Ross, Mary B. Directory of Publishing Opportunities. (Orange, J.J.: Academic Media, 1973). This guide lists journals and provides information such as style, potential subjects and financial arrangements. More useful to college faculty.

Writer, The. 8 Arlington St. Boston, MA 02116. A "How to" magazine that contains essays such as "Book Reviewing at the Local Level." "The Writer's Library" and "Titles That Talk."

Writer's Digest. 381 West Center St. Marion, Ohio 43302. A useful periodical; examples of recent articles--"RX for the Writing Blahs," "Market Update" and "The Writing Life."

STEPS IN PREPARING A MANUSCRIPT



TYPES OF ARTICLES

PRACTICE OR THEORY SUPPORTED WITH THE RESEARCH OF ANOTHER OR LITERATURE REVIEW	EXPERIMENTAL, STATISTICAL, AND HARD DATA	<u>Journal of Educational Psychology</u>
		<u>American Educational Research Journal</u>
		<u>Review of Educational Research</u>
		<u>Phi Delta Kappan</u>
		<u>Social Education</u>
		<u>Today's Education</u>
		<u>The American Teacher</u>
		<u>The English Journal</u>
ARMCHAIR, OPINION, IDEA SHARING		<u>The Social Studies</u>
		<u>Instructor</u>
		<u>The Grade Teacher</u>